

*Background Material
for 24 October*

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II. THE SITUATION IN CUBA

There is no change in this morning's report on missile sites in Cuba.

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The [] embassy in Havana reported that by dawn on 23 October Havana was under military control, and that artillery had been emplaced in coastal towns.

Alpha 66 leaders in Puerto Rico told reporters that the organization has "suspended" action against British ships bound for Cuba pending a test of the quarantine. A spokesman added, however, that "unless the missiles go, we will keep on fighting."

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III. SOVIET SHIPPING TO CUBA

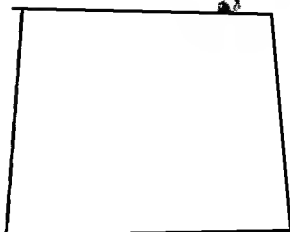
As of 1500 EDT on 24 October, at least eight of the 16 Soviet dry cargo ships known to be en route to Cuba yesterday now have turned around. Others have probably done so but current positions are not available.

Two of the ships which turned around were nearing waters north of Puerto Rico when they changed course about noon yesterday. The others were less than halfway across the Atlantic when they altered course, also some time yesterday afternoon. One ship, which left the Mediterranean on 22 October, had reentered on 24 October. Another passed Copenhagen on 23 October according to Danish reports, probably bound for Cuba, but on the 24th had reentered the Baltic.

There is no indication that any of the six tankers en route to Cuba have altered course. One of these, the Vinnitsa, carrying 5,000 tons of jet fuel, is close to Cuba with an ETA of 25 October.

We are checking Soviet merchant shipping in other areas of the world to determine whether any other ships have altered course for their home or other friendly waters. Indications are negative.

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Yuri Gagarin	-- Turned afternoon or evening of 23 October about 500 miles off Cuba
Kimovsk	-- Turned sometime on the 23rd of October (probably late afternoon or evening) about 650 nautical miles from Cuba
Poltava	-- Turned afternoon or evening of 23 October in mid-Atlantic
Dolmatova	-- Turned afternoon or evening of 23 October in mid-Atlantic
Metallurg Kurako	-- Turned afternoon or evening of 23 October in mid-Atlantic
Urgench	-- Near the Azores, not certain when she turned
Fizik Vavilov	-- Turned on afternoon or evening of 23 October about one-half day out of the Mediterranean Sea passed Gibraltar
Krasnograd	-- Turned off Copenhagen at 0800 on 23 October

I. THE SITUATION IN THE BLOC

A. Military

We still conclude that moves to increase the readiness of Soviet forces are not being implemented on a crash basis.

1. Naval: No new or unusual naval deployments have been noted. ~~There is training activity in the Black Sea, and on a large scale in the Pacific, which may have been scheduled prior to the President's speech.~~

2. Air: Overall flight activity appears normal. There are continuing indications of impending activity in the Arctic.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. Ground: Reports of Soviet troop movements in East Germany toward the West German border and of the evacuation of dependents are discounted. ~~We have no indications that Soviet or satellite ground force units are preparing to deploy to the field for other than training purposes.~~ [REDACTED]

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